

(b) The Task Force has been set up under the Chairmanship of one General Manager with five officers of Dy. GM level as members of the Task Force.

Objective of the Task Force is :

- (i) to work out plans where maximum number of OB's can be implemented with minimum efforts;
- (ii) to suggest ways to improve upon the fault repair services.

(c) Sir, Task Force has already started functioning w.e.f. 4.7.1997.

[English]

Construction of New Buildings

3634. SHRI KESHAB MAHANTA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to construct new buildings of the railway stations in Assam during 1997-98; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) Remodelling of station building at Rangiya has been taken up. Station buildings on new line between Guwahati Jogighopa have also been taken up.

Global Telecom Pact

3635. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have made commitment to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) for evolving a road map on the global telecom pact and Information Technology Agreements (IIA);

(b) if so, the details of the commitment made as per I.T.A. with WTO and details of action initiated in this regard;

(c) whether FICC have submitted a memorandum to the Government in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith action taken or proposed to be taken thereon; and

(e) the details of action plan for 1997-98?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) to (e) the information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Repairing of Railway Tracks

3636. SHRI CHANDRABHUSHAN SINGH :
SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the condition of railway tracks between Manipuri and Farrukhabad and between Shikohabad and Farrukhabad are very dilapidated;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to repair/renovate the above tracks;

(c) whether there is any proposal to electrify the above tracks;

(d) if so, the funds allocated therefor;

(e) whether there is any scheme for running of an Express train from Farrukhabad to Delhi; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) Speed on Shikohabad-Mainpuri has been raised to 60 kmph after carrying out track works. For the balance length, renewal is being proposed in the future Works Programme depending on availability of funds.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Private Courier Service

3637. SHRI DADA BABURAO PARANJPE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to the negligence of the postal department Private Courier Service has made its position strong but the Postal charges of reliable courier service is higher and charges of some couriers out of them is many times higher as compared to the speed post due to which people use cheaper courier service but they are not reliable as a result of which people have to face lot of difficulties;

(b) if so, whether action is being taken to streamline the speed post service of the postal department; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) No, Sir. Emergence of express communication needs all over the world is not due to the negligence of the Postal Department. The Speed Post Service is quite reliable and its rates are reasonable compared to other couriers. Postal Department has been focussing on the network development, technology input and business expansion of Speed Post in order to meet the express communication and distribution needs of the customers effectively. Its network & revenue is increasing consistently.

(b) and (c) Improvement, expansion and ensuring quality service in Speed Post is a continuous process. A separate Business Development Directorate within the Department has been set up to manage Speed Post on business lines.

[English]

Survey for New Rail Line between Dhulla and Indore

3638. DR. SAHEBRAO SUKRAM BAGUL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been conducted recently for new rail line between Dhulla and Indore via Narna and Shirpur in Maharashtra;

(b) If so, the details thereof; and

(c) If not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) to (c) A survey for new BG line from Dhule to Nardana and its extension upto Shirpur, is currently in progress. There is no proposal for taking up a survey for a new line from Shirpur to Indore at present.

[Translation]

Gauge Conversion between Ranchi and Lohardaga

3639. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the provisions for gauge conversion between Ranchi and Lohardaga and to extend it upto Tori have been made in the supplementary Demands for 1996-97;

(b) If so, the details of the works undertaken in this direction upto July, 1997; and

(c) the time by which the above work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs clearance has been obtained and preliminary arrangements are being made for taking up the work. Rs. 10 crores has been provided in the budget 1997-98 for this work.

(c) The work is expected to be completed in about 10 years time subject to availability of resources.

[English]

Funding of Technology for Paper Industry

3640. SHRI SURESH PRABHU : Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Technology Development Board (TDB) has approved a proposal to fund the Commercialisation of an Eco-friendly pulping technology for the paper industry;

(b) If so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of other ancillary industry likely to be helped therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) and (b) The Technology Development Board has received a proposal to fund the commercialisation of eco-friendly pulping technology for the paper industry from a Pune based private sector company. The proposal has gone through various stages of evaluation and the final decision is dependent upon the response of the applicant to the specific queries made by the Board.

(c) The proposal envisages recovery of by-products-lignin and hemicellulose, besides pith from effluent generated by the plant. There is, therefore, a possibility of growth of ancillaries based on lignin as raw material.

[Translation]

Construction of Broad Gauge Line from Ajmer to Ahmedabad

3641. SHRI TARACHAND BHAGORA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether laying of broad gauge line from Ajmer to Ahmedabad via Chittorgarh-Udaipur (Rajasthan) has been taken up; and

(b) If so, the time by when the construction work of this line has been started?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) Work has been taken up for Gauge conversion of Ajmer-Chittaurgarh-Udaipur at a cost of Rs. 262 crs.-Udaipur-Ahmedabad Gauge Conversion is not yet sanctioned. Tenders have been invited and actual work is expected to start by Oct.'97.

[English]

Promotion of Senior Technicians

3642. SHRI BHERU LAL MEENA :
SHRI PARASRAM MEGHWAL :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether posts were reduced in the cadre of Sr. Engineering Assistant and Engineering Assistant which diminished the promotion chance of Senior Technicians;